

The background image shows a home care worker, a woman with curly brown hair wearing a light blue uniform and a badge, smiling and talking to an elderly woman with short, curly grey hair who is wearing a green shirt. They are standing in front of a window with sheer curtains, and some greenery is visible outside.

Home Care: A Valued Path for Better Lives & Smarter Healthcare Spending

BDO Economic Study Briefing

August 2025

Home Care: A Valued Path for Better Lives and Smarter Healthcare Spending

Home care is essential for addressing our healthcare system challenges and meeting the needs and desires of our older population while also generating significant economic benefits to the economy.



Home care acts as a first line of defence in delayed discharges and chronic care planning as well as facilitating our older population's desire to stay at home longer.



Our study highlights that every €1 million invested in home care generates an estimated **additional €1.9 million** in economic benefits to the Irish economy. This in turn is associated with on average **c 50 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs**, along with freeing up hospital beds and nursing home beds for those most in need in the Country.



Based on 2024 delivery levels, Ireland's home care sector generated an estimated **€2 billion** in economic impact, with HCCI members providing essential support to c. 25,000 older people nationwide through their network of over 12,000 carers.

Home care is a vital component in overcoming healthcare system challenges by delivering timely and person centred care to individuals in need.

Services Provided by Home Care Providers

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Dementia Care | HSE / Private Home Support Services | |
| Personal Care | Disability Care | Palliative Care |
| Post-Operative Care | Respite Care | Companionship Care |
| Children Support | Neurological Care | |

Out of 133,000 patients seen by community specialist teams for older persons in 2024¹, **81%** were discharged home with community-based interventions providing the necessary care.

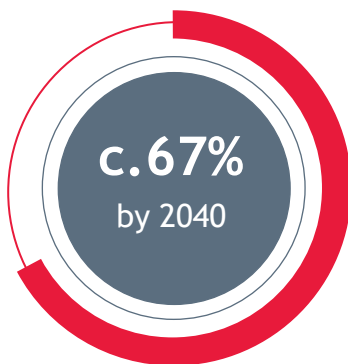
1. [HSE Enhanced Community Care - Improving health outcomes for patients across Ireland](#) (HSE.ie)

Note: This report does not address paediatric home support

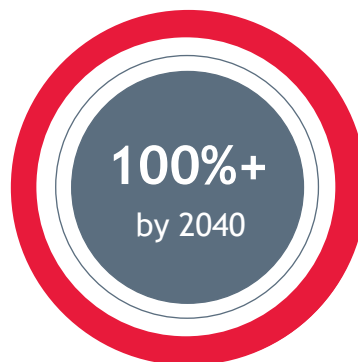
Shifting Demographics & Need for Home Support

Ireland's population is ageing rapidly. According to the latest ESRI projections²:

Number of people aged 65+
will increase by



Number of people aged 80+
will increase by



The ESRI Study opines that the significant increase in our ageing population is expected to drive the demand for annual home support **by a minimum of c. 57% up to 91% by 2040**, reaching over 45 million hours from 2022 levels of c. 28.7 million care hours (both public and privately funded).

The **independent** sector delivers **62%** of the budgeted HSE funded care hours³ to service users thereby highlighting the significant role played by independent home care operators on the health care outcomes of Ireland's older population.

2. [Projections of national demand and bed capacity requirements for older people's care in Ireland, 2022-2040: Based on the Hippocrates model](#) (ESRI, 2025)

3. [HCCI Home Care Data Series Volume 2](#) (HCCI, 2023)



The Economic Impact of the Home Care Sector

Circa €2 billion per annum

Utilising survey data garnered from participating HCCI members along with publicly available home care data, BDO in conjunction with their Economic Consultants undertook an assessment of the estimated economic impact of home care services in Ireland (both public & independent providers).

Our study reveals that home care is not just a compassionate service meeting the needs and desires of our older population - it is also a strategic economic driver.

The total economic impact of the home care sector in Ireland in 2024 is estimated at c. **€2 billion comprising of both direct and knock-on economic benefits.** The diagram below highlights the key variables contributing to the aforementioned €2 billion.

Key Highlights of the Economic Impact Study



Approximately €2 billion

Total Economic Impact in 2024 Derived from Home Care Services



€990m

Gross Value Added



€745m

Wages generated, employing 14,000+ FTEs directly in home care (spread across rural & regional areas)



€207m

Tax Revenue generated through the home care sector and related demand

Current Sector Challenges

Current Sector Challenges



Staffing in terms of both recruitment and retention is the main barrier to the delivery of home care.



The **wait times** for a carer⁴ is a national problem with 5,556 persons on the wait list as of December 2024.

However, there is also **regional disparity** - for example as of Dec-24, **CHO 4** (Cork/Kerry) had the highest waiting list of people at c. 1,000 *vis-à-vis* **CHO 9** (North Dublin) which had no waiting list.

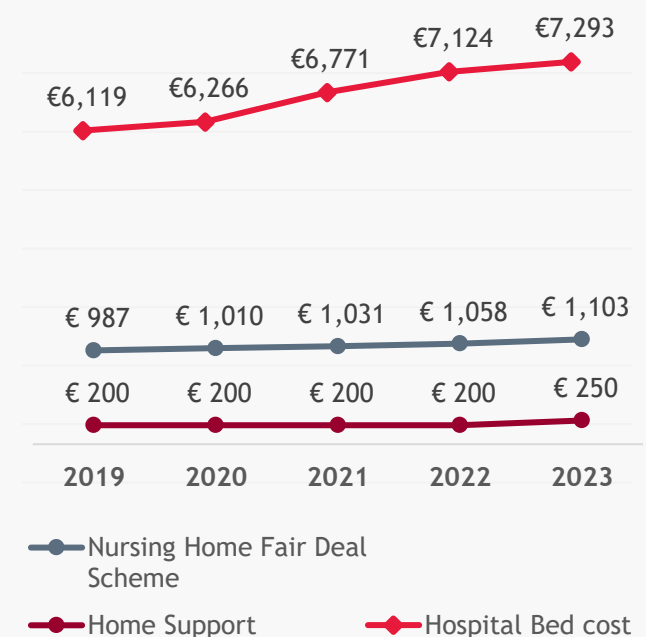
Value for Money of Home Care

Whilst recognising the importance of long term residential care (LTRC) and nursing home care within the continuum of care, the graphic below highlights the cost effectiveness and value for money of home care in comparison to hospital care (delayed discharges) and nursing home or long-term residential care.

Home care is more cost-effective than hospital beds (cost savings in relation to delayed discharges) and LTRC, when provided to individuals for whom home support is medically appropriate.

4. [HCCI Home Care Data Series 2024](#) (HCCI, 2024)

Average cost per person per week for Home Support Services vs Nursing Home (Fair Deal) vs Hospital care*



*Estimated hospital cost calculated as the average daily running cost of an in-patient hospital bed across acute hospitals reported in 2019, adjusted for inflation; nursing home costs derived from average fair deal rates; weekly home care calculated using average hours per user by an authorisation scheme rate of €31.

Key attributes

€990m
Gross Value
Added

Home care is a vital part of Ireland's healthcare system and a significant contributor to **economic activity**.

Sláintecare.
Right Care. Right Place. Right Time.

Not only does home care align with the objectives of **Sláintecare**, it meets the personal desires of Ireland's ageing population to stay at home for longer.



In addition, home care alleviates the pressures on our acute health system often operating as the first line of defence to **delayed discharges** and **chronic care planning**.


14,000+
FTEs

Finally, home care delivers care to c.70,000⁵ older people nationally, employs 14,000+ FTE people in the sector and generates an estimated **€2 billion** to the economy annually thereby representing significant value for money.

5. [Projections of national demand and bed capacity requirements for older people's care in Ireland, 2022-2040: Based on the Hippocrates model](#) (ESRI, 2025)

The Call for Action

The HCCI as the largest representative body for home care in Ireland appreciates Government's support for the sector and calls for further action in the form of:

- ▶ **Increased annual recurring funding** to prioritise home care workers and older people
- ▶ **Urgent implementation of a long-awaited Statutory Home Support Scheme**
- ▶ **Workforce strategy** as set out in the recommendations of the SWAG report⁶ to boost recruitment and retention and a taskforce to address rural waiting lists

The home care sector is crucial to Ireland's healthcare system and economy.

Policymakers and stakeholders need to fully recognise the value of home care. A national strategy to support home care's growth and development is needed to ensure a more resilient, equitable, and enriching future for Ireland's ageing population

6. [Report of the Strategic Workforce Advisory Group on Home Carers and Nursing Home Healthcare Assistants](#) (Department of Health, 2022)



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